

BOOK REVIEW

The complete field guide to butterflies of Australia. By M. F. Braby. CSIRO Publishing, Collingwood, Victoria; October 2004; x + 340 pp; paperback. ISBN 0 643 09027 4. Price A\$39.95.

This handy book is intended as a field version of Michael Braby's 2 volume opus, 'Butterflies of Australia: their identification, biology and distribution', published by CSIRO in 2000. As such, it focuses on colour illustrations of all species, the facing text mainly devoted to notes on behaviour, habitat and larval food plants, features most useful to field collectors. However, it does stand alone as a useful reference work on Australian butterflies and in some cases updates the previous work.

The number of butterfly species now recognised within Australian limits has increased from 414 in 'Butterflies of Australia' to 416 in the present work, with two deletions [plus the continued non-recognition of *Elodina tongura* Tindale], two additional species recognised from mainland Australia and two additional species recorded from Christmas Island. However, since going to press several further discoveries have been made, including *Acrodipsas decima* Miller & Lane from the Northern Territory and several newly recorded species from the islands of Torres Strait, so the list continues to increase.

As in 'Butterflies of Australia', the mandatory rule of the International Code of Zoological Nomenclature concerning gender agreement in specific names has been disregarded; thus another opportunity to correct this indiscretion has been lost. The trend towards 'original spellings' is only useful in Europe, where generic placement of butterfly species varies from country to country. Generic placement in Australia is generally stable and books published by CSIRO should, instead of following 'trends', follow the rules of the Code and set a good and proper example to the next generation of enthusiasts. In the field guide a greater emphasis has been placed on common names, with author citations for species relegated to the accompanying checklist near the back of the book. This is also unfortunate, since common names are not universally recognised and have no standing under the Code.

The text appears relatively free of typographical errors. A cursory read only produced two - *Deudorix* 'smiles' [*smilis*] on p. 26 and Dusky 'Night' [Knight] on p. 151. On p. 25, 'less' is used inappropriately in place of 'fewer' when dealing with numbers. The photograph on p. 9 appears to be upside down. One of the studies used to support recognition (p. 24) of *Ornithoptera euphorion* (Gray) as a distinct species [Morinaka *et al.* 2000] did not use any Australian material and is inappropriately quoted.

The above criticisms are not intended to detract from the overall quality and usefulness of this fine book. The illustrations are superb and, together with the accompanying text and maps, should enable identification of even the most difficult of species. It is highly recommended, particularly for those who enjoy watching or collecting butterflies in the field or have not lashed out on the more lavish 'Butterflies of Australia'.

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